

BROADBAND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



One of the biggest hurdles in broadband deployment is finding the funding to undertake the varying projects necessary for ubiquitous connectivity in a community. There are a myriad of federal funding programs available to help communities improve broadband connectivity. This document will highlight some of the existing federal funding programs, what they fund, where to apply, and important dates.

This explainer is not an exhaustive list of available funding opportunities. For a more comprehensive list of federal funding options, the National Telecommunications Information Administration ("NTIA") has created a Federal Funding Guide that outlines broadband funding programs from a variety of federal agencies. Review NTIA's 2021 guide [here](#). States may also make funding available for community projects. Click [here](#) for contacts and resources for state broadband programs.

U.S. Department of the Treasury: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds ("SLFRF")

The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds provide money directly to states and localities to help address the economic fallout and accelerate the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the Treasury has allocated \$195.3 billion to states, \$65.1 billion to counties, \$45.6 billion to metropolitan cities, \$20 billion to Tribal governments, and \$19.5 billion to non-entitlement units of local government. The Treasury uses a different formulaic approach to determine how much funding will be allocated to states, metropolitan cities, counties, and non-entitlement units of local government.

Local governments can expect to receive funding in two tranches, the first having been provided in May of 2021 and the balance to be delivered in May of 2022. However, states that have experienced a net increase in unemployment of more than 2 percentage points since February 2020 will receive their full allocation in a single payment. Costs must be incurred by December 31, 2024, but construction can continue until December 31, 2026.

SLFRF funding can be used for broadband deployment in areas that are unserved or underserved. Here, unserved and underserved areas are any area lacking access to a wireline connection capable of reliably delivering speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload. While the project must be designed to provide service to unserved and underserved areas, those households and businesses do not need to be the only ones served. Additionally, internet access or digital literacy assistance is an eligible use for those households that have faced a negative economic impact due to COVID-19.

For more information, potential applicants can find the SLFRF website [here](#) and a summary of the Final Rule [here](#). Potential applicants can submit a request for funding through the Department of the Treasury website. Information about state programs can be found [here](#).